



A thought for today
Is this what 70 years of freedom means for our children?

KAILASH SATYARTH

Starved Of Oxygen?

Gorakhpur tragedy shockingly underlines shabby state of UP's public healthcare

The stark reality of UP's failing public healthcare system has been highlighted by the Gorakhpur tragedy, where over 60 children died at the Baba Raghav Das Medical College last week.



in two decades serving as a parliamentarian he asked as many as 89 questions related to the health and family welfare ministry.

The broader problem is that no matter which governments come and go, lack of sanitation, open drains and waterlogged streets remain, and during monsoons they spike Japanese encephalitis cases in eastern UP.

The immediate need is to provide all possible medical support to Baba Raghav Das Medical College. But this does not mean brushing institutional shortfalls under the carpet.

Good Riddance

Despotic Pahlaj Nihalani is sacked, now Praseon Joshi must reform the Censor Board

Better late than never. Government has finally heeded repeated calls for sacking CBFC chairperson Pahlaj Nihalani. These calls rose across the film industry, audiences and actually all Indians who want to see the country's soft power flourish.

These reforms must be implemented. But in the meantime, Benegal himself has underlined that the censorship guidelines are not carved in stone, the censors bring their own sensibility and understanding of society to the interpretation of these guidelines.

Dandiya politics

It was a Rajya Soap-a opera in Gujarat, minor characters' stock rose sharply

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In Gujarat, the all-powerful Shah-and-Shah has for once been bested by Patel rap. In the land of the dhokla, the ruling party was forced to admit someone had given it a dhokha.

The Gujarat face-off was also like a T20 match where the scoreboard kept shifting every hour. The eventual winner in the Amit Shah vs Ahmed Patel contest was decided by the Duckworth Lewis system with EC playing 'neutral' umpire.

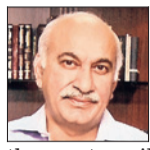
For Gujaratis who expertly track the rise and fall of the stock market, this was a day when politics became dalal street. The characters in the drama, erstwhile minor netas who suddenly became national figures, saw their stock rise sharply and command more political equity than ever before.

Navratra came early to Gujarat with netas playing political dandiya. But those who carried big sticks could not prevent others from dancing in circles.

Mission Possible: A New India

PM is using India's high-quality, low-cost technology to lift 400 million out of poverty by 2022

MJ Akbar



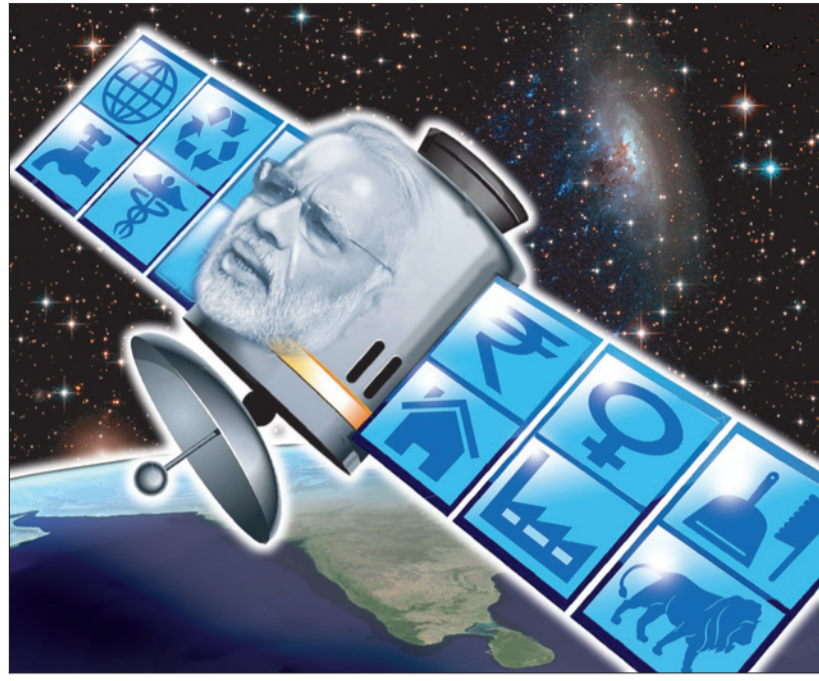
On 15 February this year, Isro placed 104 satellites into orbit using only a single launch of one vehicle, PSLV-C37. The video of the event, available easily enough on the net, shows the familiar zoom of a rocket entering space, and then little flicks chase one another into the deep distance until the mission is completed.

The acceleration in space, impressive as it is, might be less spectacular than the change taking place on the ground. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has initiated a transformation towards a new India in which historic burdens such as poverty and corruption have been eliminated, and inheritance ills like communalism and casteism are only bad memory.

Transformative change needs radical thinking. The economic empowerment of women is being used as a principal cure for poverty. Under Mudra, the PM's signature project for those at the base of the economic pyramid, loans worth Rs 3,55,590 crore have been disbursed.

The PM's housing plan, for the impoverished, is an equally big story in gender emancipation. A woman can take this home loan as sole owner; but a man needs a woman as co-owner unless he is a widower or bachelor.

The objective is to lift about 400 million out of harsh poverty in five years by ensuring that the first fruits and largest share of economic growth go to those who need it most.



PM is using India's proven capability in high-quality, low-cost technology to create efficient, sustainable and corruption-free delivery systems for direct benefits to the poor on an unprecedented scale.

Jan Dhan was an essential first step. In 2015, within three months, banks opened 300 million accounts for those who had never crossed the doors of a bank before.

Use of technology for transparency has also become mandatory in the bidding process for government contracts. In a country where, particularly during the long decade between 2004 and 2014, contracts became synonymous with corruption, the change is a virtual revolution, leaving sections of the old political-industrial complex frustrated, angry and desperate to restore the previous order.

New India is being fashioned from embers of the old. Sceptics who cannot fathom why Narendra Modi has become

architect of our Constitution, Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, included this as a guiding tenet of our Constitution. Beef was banned in most states by Congress governments.

Of late, cow vigilantes have attacked Muslims and Dalits on suspicion of eating or transporting beef. Two incidents attracted wide, and understandable, media coverage: of Pehlu Khan in Rajasthan and Junaid in Haryana.

No government can prevent crime. A government's bona fides are tested by what it does in pursuit of the criminal. In Rajasthan, seven suspects have been charged with murder. The state's chief minister Vasundhara Raje has dismissed as malicious the allegation that her administration was biased and argued the same in this newspaper, in an open piece headlined 'Mob violence is unacceptable' (27 July). Comparisons are not an answer, but she pointed out that murders and mob violence took a higher tally in Rajasthan in 2012, when Congress was in power.

On 29 June, PM Modi expressed his anguish during the centenary event of Mahatma Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat, wondering how much pain Gandhi himself would have felt. Gandhi had offered to die for the cow, but never advocated violence in its name.

Both voters and politicians are increasingly dismissive of the motivated and fraying narrative of extended guilt. Nitiish Kumar, for instance, refused to buy this false propaganda of Congress, whose only electoral crutch now is the alleged insecurity of minorities.

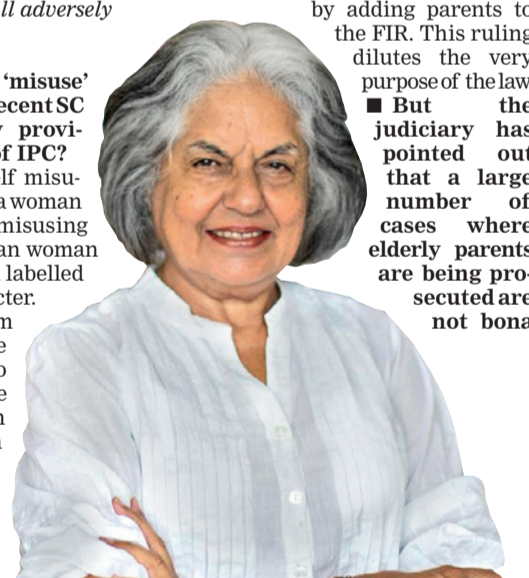
In 2013, there was an assassination attempt on Narendra Modi during a rally in Patna. At that critical, volatile moment, he said that Hindus and Muslims had a choice: they could either fight each other, or they could unite to fight the true enemy, poverty. Fraternity and prosperity of all Indians is the only creed of Narendra Modi.

The writer is Union Minister of State for External Affairs

'When a woman uses law, she is accused of misuse; when an Indian woman uses law, she is labelled with bad character'

The Supreme Court's recent direction stopping arrests or coercive action against accused husbands or their relatives charged in anti-dowry complaints under Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code without ascertaining the veracity of the allegations marks a shift in Indian jurisprudence on women-related issues.

How you define 'use' and 'misuse' of law with respect to the recent SC directives on anti-dowry provisions under Section 498A of IPC? The word 'misuse' is itself misused by the courts. Whenever a woman uses the law, she is told she is misusing it; shockingly, when an Indian woman accesses the law, she is often labelled as a woman of bad character.



subjected to violence, Section 498A was a great respite. In the majority of Indian families, a newly-wed couple lives in a joint family, where the bahu is living with her in-laws. If such a woman is tortured, physically or mentally, within the first two years of marriage and is thrown out of her matrimonial house, she is left with no option but to resort to legal action against her persecutors - including her parents-in-law - who at times connive with their son.

Despite such ground realities, courts are saying women are misusing the law by adding parents to the FIR. This ruling dilutes the very purpose of the law.

But the judiciary has pointed out that a large number of cases where elderly parents are being prosecuted are not bona

fide. Your comments?

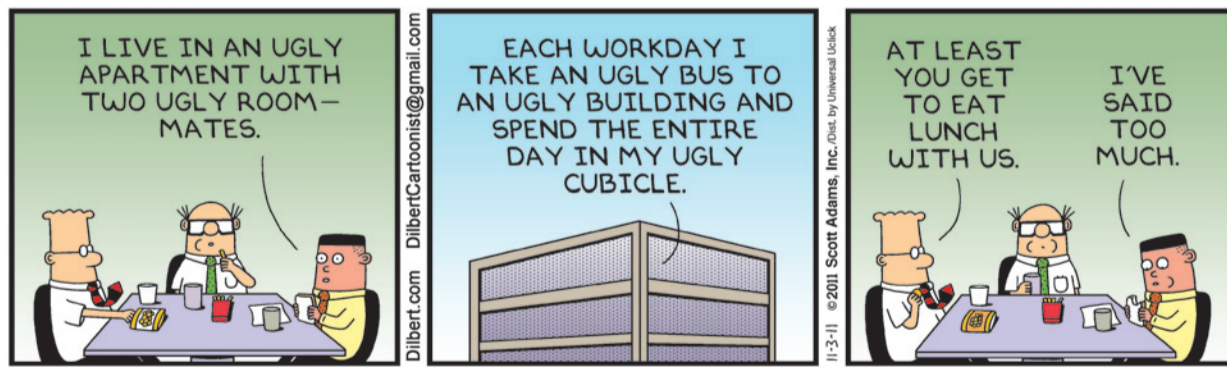
The judiciary cannot go by numbers alone. It has to treat every individual case as per its merit. 'Misuse of law' is a sweeping generalisation, which then becomes a benchmark, quoted in support of the next judgment. Rulings in such cases cannot be made based on previous rulings, or mere police statements or general public opinions.

Q&A Not at all. If a woman has an unhappy marriage, she will file for a divorce. Educated women are not manipulating law: they are walking out of the marriage.

Section 498A comes into the picture when a woman is subjected to violence. If we condemn terrorists or arsonists, how can we not be moved by the plight of a persecuted woman, who works hard for the sake of her family, and tries in vain to come to terms with the violence she is subjected to?

I agree that strong action must be taken against anyone who abuses law. I do not support elderly men and women being arrested and roped in for no reason by anyone. No law should be misused by anyone. An allegation by a woman is not enough to make an arrest. The police must investigate the matter and then register a complaint, under the sections they deem fit.

dilbert



Pulkit Sharma

Supreme consciousness becomes manifest in various elements of creation through the play of the Divine Mother. To realise that we are a part of the Supreme consciousness, we need to surrender to the Mother and seek her grace.

The Mother is one, but appears before us differently, each appearance representing her diverse powers and facets. Maheshwari is full of wisdom, peace and compassion and she nurtures everyone based on their intentions and actions to march forward towards the truth. Mahakali is the embodiment of staggering strength and force and she vehemently uproots all anti-divine forces in individuals so that they make

swift progress. Mahalakshmi is the personification of divine beauty, harmony and bliss and she encourages us to refine our being so that there is harmony and beauty within and around us. Mahasaraswati is the epitome of knowledge and excellence and bestows upon us a relentless spirit of perfection which encourages us to act according to the divine plan.

When an individual reaches a particular high point in spiritual development, these four powers of the Divine Mother find their harmony and freedom of movement within jiva, the individual consciousness. Consequently, Mahashakti or universal mother becomes manifest and unites us with the light and bliss of Supreme consciousness. According to Sri Aurobindo, if this spiritual growth could be carried out at a substantial collective level, human

nature will be permanently transformed into dynamic divine nature. Evolution of consciousness can be possible only when two great powers that are within us and also potentially present everywhere in the universe, work in synchronisation. The first is a relentless aspiration in the heart of the jiva to become one with the Supreme and the second is the grace of the Mother. While the grace of the Divine Mother is omnipresent, it is often our aspiration that is fickle. Therefore, we need to strengthen and refine our aspiration so that its flame burns perpetually. Sri Aurobindo elucidates a three-pronged approach of surrender, plasticity and rejection through which we can work on our aspiration. Surrender needs to be constant, vigorous and complete. At all times, the individual must actively

Sacred space

Become Wise
How to become wise?
By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest; Second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest.

Confucius

Everything We Have, Belongs To Her

offer each and every part of his being to the Divine Mother. No part of the self should resist or shy away from this movement under any pretext because grace is able to do its work only when surrender is total. Besides this, one needs to cultivate plasticity so that the power of the Mother can enter within and bring transformation. A lot of times, higher power is waiting to guide and uplift us, but because of our tunnel vision and rigid notions, we are unable to receive it. Therefore, it is crucial to let go of all preconceived notions and become malleable to the will of the Mother.

The component of rejection requires us to scan ourselves thoroughly and identify everything within us that is false. Once we know it, we need to make repeated, unflinching efforts in rejecting it so that anti-divine forces do not impede our transformation. Once we do our bit, the Divine Mother does the work. Post your comments at speakingtree.in